

Supportive Housing: Helping young adults to live independently

Israel (Western Galilee) - Israel Unlimited

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The Supported Housing program initiated by Israel Unlimited – the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee’s strategic partnership with the Israeli Government and the Ruderman Family Foundation – assists young adults with intellectual disabilities to become involved in community and social activities. Once they are transitioned into their own apartments, they are also provided with a care coordinator and a mentor who teach them to live independently and who are continuously involved in their overall well-being.

"Israel still has long way to go to allow disabled people to live with dignity, but we are starting with supported housing.... We need to work with the families to make them believe in the project."

- Shira RUDERMAN, Israel Director, Ruderman Family Foundation

FACTS & FIGURES

- There are currently three regions that have implemented the program, and to date more than 40 young adults with disabilities have received assistance, support, and guidance and are now living independently within the community.
- The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) will be quadrupling the scope of Supported Housing, with nine new locations already identified.

PROBLEMS TARGETED

Today there are approximately 1 million people of working age (18–65) with disabilities in Israel, many who suffer from more than one disability. Given the lack of government support for independent living, many young adults with disabilities end up in institutions or without adequate services in the community. Those who wish to live independently face many difficulties, such as accessing public buildings, finding suitable accommodations, receiving family support, learning independent living skills, developing a group of friends, and finding appropriate employment.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

To ensure a successful transition to independent living, each young adult is assigned a mentor who works with him or her on an individual basis to help define goals and to build a plan for reaching these goals. In addition to personal development, mentors help connect these young adults with existing services in the community. Mentoring also includes helping to find an apartment; to navigate the complex process of receiving all appropriate governmental subsidies, including those from the Ministry of Housing; reaching out to employment services; opening a bank account; and managing household responsibilities.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

Israel Unlimited, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee's strategic partnership with the Israeli Government and the Ruderman Family Foundation works in partnership with the government, and therefore programs are only piloted with the consent of the government and the agreement that they will be implemented on a national level once deemed successful. Moreover, Israel Unlimited works closely with the Ministry of Welfare to make the program sustainable and to eventually become part of the formal service system in Israel.

Photo: Yes

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